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**Your Degree In Recognition Skills**

**By Chris Herrmann**

Of course, we all majored in recognition skills at high school. Being positive comes as second

nature to everybody and we never focus too much on faults. Unfortunately there the fairy tale must end. Complaining, it seems, is a much more developed skill than praising and many people find it difficult to be only positive. It is as if they can't help themselves adding a crushing blow. Like Carolyn Burnham (Annette Bening) in "American Beauty" when she praises her daughter Jane (Thora Birch) for her cheerleading performance, she says, "I was watching you very closely, and you didn't screw up once."

Language

It is often said that, in communication, we get the response we deserve. Bear this in mind when you next ask for an additional task to be undertaken. Listen to the words that you use. Do you apologize, saying: "I'm really sorry that I have to drop this on you" Do you antagonize, saying: "Whether you like it or not you'll have to do this by 5pm." Do you empathize, saying: "I know this is a pain, but it really needs to be done." Do you sympathize, saying: "Poor you! This extra work probably means overtime." ...or do you enthuse, by saying:

"Hey, you're just the person who can help me! I need this urgent job to be done today, and I was thinking you'd be the best person to get it out accurately and on time."

No prizes for guessing which approach gets a more energetic response. Enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm and if you can embed a few pieces of recognition in your request without sounding sarcastic you'll stand a better chance of getting a motivated performance.

When you are actually praising someone, try to tell them how you feel. "It made me proud that I work for the same company when I saw you handling that complex customer problem", means so much more than, "Good job, keep it up." "I wish I had your comic timing. Your ability to make people laugh and feel motivated to get on with the toughest and most unpleasant of jobs leaves me in awe." says more than "I'm impressed, carry on, dude!"

Also make an attempt to acknowledge that you really did understand that the behavior was appropriate; "I was especially impressed when you offered to call them to update them on progress at the end of the day. That's a great standard to work to"

Managers can develop a crippling disability when they use language variously known as "verbal diarrhea", "let me tell you what you mean" and "that's not the way I'd do it". As people climb the management ladder there is a tendency for them to lose the listening skill and to gain an add-on to their verbosity skills. This is not surprising as they are probably expected to talk for most of the day; however when it comes to gathering information to promote informal recognition, keeping your ears open and your mouth shut is an essential skill.

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### **Change Your Thinking And Get Richer**

**By Mark Spall**

Imagine two situations; 1) finding £1000, that is yours to keep with no strings attached and 2) earning £1000 through hard-work.

I'm curious – is there any difference between the value of them? Do you consider one to be worth more than the other? Is there any difference in how you would spend them?

Are they different to you in some way? You can do exactly the same thing with them. I wonder if you really would. Well if you do attach a different value to them you could be missing out; read on to learn how to get more for free!

My point in all this questioning is that if we only value the 'things' that we have to work hard for there is a danger that the 'things' that we can have with ease just pass us by – they are unvalued and do not grab our attention. These 'things' are not just money of course but skills, knowledge, relationships to name a few; they are all valuable assets.

The secret of success is to consider this all in two parts:

1) the value of it – that is how well it meets your needs, not just monetary value. This applies whether it

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was easy to come by or not.

2) the recognition of the achievement in attaining it. Some things can be harder to acquire than others and we should reward ourselves through recognition when we acquire such things.

You see, it is worth the same whether you had to acquire new skills or resources to get it or rely on the existing (carefully honed) ones that you take for granted.

How about if, from now on, you recognise what you have for what it is worth and separately for what it took to achieve it. Seeing it as two parts will open your awareness to the things that you can have that are already available to you without effort. When you see yourself making these changes and getting different results be sure to thank yourself. Your mind wants to please you and likes gratitude. In return it will do it all the more for you.

Enjoy getting richer!

Mark Spall is a Coach and Leadership trainer and delivers his materials through a variety of innovative mediums. More on Mark can be found at

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), a knowledge base and support network for young

people who wish to achieve their best.



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